DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 078 099 UD 013 563

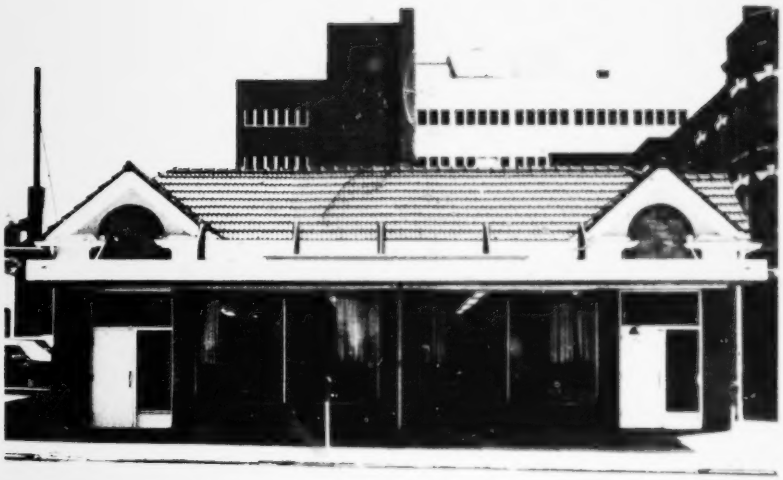
AUTHOR	Texley, Lloyd C.; Kalinski, Raymond
TITLE	Individualized Study Center--Junior High. Funded by ESEA Title I. Program Number 93.
INSTITUTION	Omaha Public Schools, Nebr.
PUB DATE	72
NOTE	39p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	*Compensatory Education Programs; Individualized Instruction; Intervention; *Junior High School Students; Program Evaluation; Pupil Personnel Services; Secondary Education; Student Adjustment; Student Problems; *Student Rehabilitation; *Study Centers; Study Facilities
IDENTIFIERS	Elementary Secondary Education Act Title I; ESEA Title I; *Nebraska; Omaha

ABSTRACT

The objectives of the Individualized Study Center Program, funded under Title I of the 1965 Elementary Secondary Education Act, were as follows: (1) provide an environment which is designed to lead to wholesome personal and social adjustments; (2) provide an educational environment in which, under the guidance of understanding teachers, the student can participate in educational experiences and activities which produce the learning he needs, either for continued education in a present school operation or for the world of work; (3) provide guidance and motivation for the student, through self-knowledge and self-understanding to modify his behavior in socially acceptable ways; (4) provide a setting in which the student is encouraged to seek the assistance necessary for him to discover ways to compensate for inadequacies in his personal life; (5) provide the basic framework for establishing programs in basic education and introduce vocational skill development to broaden each student's educational and/or vocational horizons; and, (6) provide opportunities for the student to develop the motivation, desire, and attitudes which will make it possible for him to return to his home school at the earliest practical time. The junior high individualized study center includes two large rooms providing space for the open concept teaching environment. [Pages 32, 32a, and 32b of the Appendix have been deleted from this document for copyright reasons.] (Authors/JM)

FILMED FROM BEST AVAILABLE COPY

ED 078099



U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

OMAHA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Individualized Study Center—Junior High

Funded by ESEA, Title I

Program Number 93

UD 013563

ED 078099

OMAHA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
OMAHA, NEBRASKA

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Joseph M. Hart, Jr.—*President*
Paul C. Kennedy—*Vice-president*

John C. Barnhart
Mrs. Dorothy C. Beavers
Joseph A. Dempsey
Mrs. Maurice J. Frank
Leo A. Hoffmann
R.F. Jenkins
Richard J. O'Brien, Jr.
Charles A. Peters
Tim J. Rouse
Frank E. Stanek

INDIVIDUALIZED STUDY CENTER – JUNIOR HIGH

Owen A. Knutzen
Superintendent of Schools

Rene Hlavac, *Director*
Pupil Personnel Services

Robert K. Davis, *Project Director*
Title I

Prepared by:

Lloyd Texley
Evaluation Coordinator

Raymond Kalinski
Research Assistant

I. Introduction

In a changing society, educators are initiating alternative school programs designed to meet the needs of all children and youth on a more flexible and individual basis.

With this in mind, the Omaha Public School System has developed the Individualized Study Center (ISC) program. Initiated in 1967-68 on the senior high level, the ISC attempts to meet the needs of students unable to succeed in a regular school setting. This relatively new and different educational concept also tries to assume a more complete approach to a specific group of students with problems of a personal, social, emotional or behavioral nature.

The first center, established in 1968 for eleven students, has led to development of four ISC's in the Omaha Public School System, each equipped to serve one hundred fifty students. In addition to the two high school centers and one vocational skills center, the junior high ISC, established in December of 1971, is now serving Omaha Public School students.

A counseling oriented educational center, the junior high center has a planned instructional program designed to assist youth in making appropriate educational, social and personal adjustments. The prime focus of the center is acceptance, patience and concentration upon the positive attributes in each individual student.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

II. Objectives 1
III. Facilities 7
IV. Personnel 8
V. In-Service Training 9
VI. Student Population Description 9
VII. Operation of the Centers 13
- A. Determining Eligibility
- B. Center Orientation
- C. Curriculum
- D. Parental Involvement

VIII. A Case Study 16
IX Evaluation 20

Appendix

- Clippings
- Farnam Street Press
- JIM Scale Information
- Parent Questionnaire
- Achievement Award

II. Objectives

The following is a list of objectives which the junior high study center hopes to accomplish.

A. Provide an environment which is designed to lead to wholesome personal and social adjustments.

II. Objectives

B. Provide an educational environment in which, under the guidance of understanding teachers, the student can participate in educational experiences and activities which produce the learning he needs, either for continued education in a present school operation or for the world of work.

II. Objectives

C. Provide guidance and motivation for the student, through self-knowledge and self-understanding to modify his behavior in socially acceptable ways.

II. Objectives

D. Provide a setting in which the student is encouraged to seek the assistance necessary for him to discover ways to compensate for inadequacies in his personal life.

II. Objectives

E. Provide the basic framework for establishing programs in basic education and introduce vocational skill development to broaden each student's educational and/or vocational horizons.

II. Objectives

F. Provide opportunities for the student to develop the motivation, desire and attitudes which will make it possible for him to return to his home school at the earliest practical time.

III. Facilities

The junior high individualized study center is housed in a building at 3025 Farnam Street. This location was utilized as a building and loan facility and as a dance studio just prior to its lease by the Omaha Public Schools. Two large rooms provide space for the open concept teaching environment which has proved to be beneficial in working with youngsters assigned to the center. Student desks have been replaced by chairs and round, rectangular and trapezoid tables. Many audio-visual aids are available to both teachers and students and may be used for small group work or individual viewing.

IV. Personnel

Six full time teachers and one full time counselor were assigned to staff the junior high ISC during the 1971-72 school year. Five of the six were first year teachers who had expressed an interest in working individually with junior high age students. The sixth was a veteran teacher who had taught in the core area in several schools and who had become highly involved in helping poor readers improve their reading skills.

The *counselor,* fully certified, was responsible for personal and vocational guidance of all ISC students. The counselor was also charged with the responsibility of helping to develop a guidance and counseling point of view among the teaching staff.

The *assistant director* of all the individualized study centers was also responsible for providing the administrative leadership in the junior high center.

V. In-service Training

The in-service program for the professional staff of the junior high ISC began during the week of fall conferences which preceded the opening of school. Since the junior high center did not open until December, 1971, the teachers were able to observe experienced teachers in action at the two senior high centers. In addition they attended staff meetings at these centers and were able to learn techniques which had proved to be successful.

Since its opening, two staff meetings have been held at the junior high center each week. These meetings were organized to accomplish the following objectives:

A. Acquaint the staff with backgrounds and problems of incoming students.

B. Discuss methods of understanding and working with students already in the program.

C. Provide information about curriculum and teaching materials and methods.

D. Help develop insights and understanding about the types of students and their particular needs.

E. Provide time for open discussion about any concern or problem that may need immediate attention.

VI. Student Population Description

In Tables 1, 2, 3 and 4 are presented the ability level, race, reason for referral and age-grade distributions of Individualized Study Center students.

Table 1 (April '72)
Ability Level Distribution

		Ability Level						
		Above Avg.	High Avg.	Avg.	Low Avg.	Upper EMH	EMH	Total
Grade	7	2	2	6	4	3	2	19
	8	1	2	14	10	8	1	36
	9	0	1	15	3	1	2	22
	Total	3	5	35	17	12	5	77
	% of Total	4	6	45	23	16	6	100

Table 2 (April '72)
Race Distribution

		Race					
		Caucasian	Negro	Indian	Chicano	Oriental	Total
Grade	7	14	4	1	0	0	19
	8	22	13	1	0	0	36
	9	15	6	1	0	0	22
	Total	51	23	3	0	0	77
	% of Total	66	30	4	0	0	100

Table 3 (April '72)
Reason for Referral Distribution

		Reason for Referral											
		Pregnancy	Health	Drug Related	Emotional	Poor Peer Relat.	Fighting	Disruptive	Truancy	Family	Academic	Multiple	Total
Grade	7	0	1	0	7	0	0	4	1	0	0	6	19
	8	3	0	1	6	1	2	8	7	1	0	7	36
	9	1	1	0	1	3	1	6	6	1	0	2	22
	Total	4	2	1	14	4	3	18	14	2	0	15	77
	% of Total	5	3	1	18	5	4	24	18	3	0	19	100

Table 4 (May '72)
Age-Grade – Male-Female Distribution
Age as of October 1, 1971

		7			8			9			School		
		M	F	Tot.	M	F	Tot.	M	F	Tot.	M	F	Tot.
AGE	12 years	4	1	5							4	1	5
	12½	4	0	4	1	1	2				5	1	6
	13	5	1	6	5	4	9				10	5	15
	13½	5	2	7	2	1	3	1	0	1	8	3	11
	14	1	0	1	5	1	6	1	1	2	7	2	9
	14½	1	0	1	8	4	12	6	3	9	15	7	22
	15				2	0	2	4	0	4	6	0	6
	15½				2	0	2	3	1	4	5	1	6
	16							0	0	0	0	0	0
	16½							0	1	1	0	1	1
SUB – TOTAL	Normal Age	13	2	15	12	6	18	11	4	15	36	12	48
	Over Age	7	2	9	12	4	16	3	2	5	22	8	30
	Under Age	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	0	1	2	1	3
	Total	20	4	24	25	11	36	15	6	21	60	21	81

(Boxed figures indicate normal age range for each grade)

It was also found that forty-six students or 58 percent of the Individualized Study Center participants resided in a Title I elementary attendance district and that 92 percent entered the center from a public school within the Omaha district.

The following list shows the monthly entry rate of the center.

	Number	Percent
December	34	44
January	17	21
February	8	10
March	10	12
April	11	13

VII. Operation of the Centers

A. Determining Eligibility

Recommendations for placement in the junior high center occurred only after other attempts to help the student adjust to the regular school operation had failed.

A screening committee consisting of the Superintendent of Schools, the Director of Guidance, the principal and counselor of the ISC, a representative of Pupil Personnel Services, the head psychologist for the school district and parents were available to decide on the placement of a student in the ISC program.

The screening committee considered for placement those students who exhibited one or more of the following characteristics:

1. Unstable home situation – the inability of the home to cope with the problems of youth in a changing society and lack of parental support.

2. Loss of identity – youth who have lost their identity in the present school situation.

3. Nonconformists – youth who refuse to conform to existing school rules and regulations.

4. Disinterest in school – students who exhibit a general lack of interest in their present school situation.

5. Inadequate study habits – students who exhibit poor study habits and related school success.

6. Ability to succeed – students who exhibit the aptitudes necessary for success but are in fact underachieving in reading.

Pertinent information was gathered through interviews with the student, his parents, his school, and other individuals involved with the student's welfare. Testing, carried out by Psychological Services, was also part of the overall evaluation.

Based on the decision to transfer a student into the program, the ISC received all necessary information approximately one week before enrollment. The director, counselor and teachers were then familiar with the student's background before he arrived at the center.

B. Center Orientation

Before a student began his actual course work in the program, he received an orientation on the center's operation.

At the outset, emphasis was placed on understanding and acceptance through the use of individual and group counseling sessions. Individualized instruction allowed students to work at their own speed on material that was designed to give them successful experiences. During this introductory phase, students became familiar with the goals and rules of the center.

A student information sheet was used to gather additional information about the student and his family. The student was asked to explain, in his own words, why he thought he had entered the center thus exploring his feelings and attitudes about his particular situation.

After completing these preliminary steps including class schedule arrangements, the student was taken on a tour of the building. He was shown the various class areas, introduced to teachers and usually began attending classes the next school day.

C. Curriculum

The Individualized Study Center curriculum was adapted to meet the special needs of each student. For the most part, the curriculum followed the basic patterns of the regular school operation; however, modifications were made for each student in terms of his emotional, social, academic and occupational information needs. The level of instruction was geared to the student's ability and achievement. Remedial instruction was given to needy students on a one-to-one or small group basis. A flexible schedule enabled the student to determine the number of hours he would work each day at the Individualized Study Center choosing between morning or afternoon classes.

He was encouraged to study the regular academic subjects such as math, social studies, English and art or science. At the end of each week a progress report was given to each student. In addition, students were encouraged to participate in special activities such as the construction project pictured below. A school newsletter (Appendix) , *The Farnam Street Press,* was published by ISC students on a weekly basis.

D. Parental Involvement

The center worked toward a close, cooperative relationship with the students' parent(s) or guardian(s). Each week the teachers recorded student progress in attitudes and in academic work to help keep parents informed on the development of their child. Parents frequently came to the center for conferences with the teachers and counselor and, in some cases, home visits were made by the co-director and counselor. The close teacher-student-counselor relationship enabled the student and the parent to be continually aware of the student's progress. Progress reports were also sent to the parents ach semester.

VIII. A Case Study

Statement of Significant Problems

According to test results from Psychological Services and from the Omaha-Douglas County Health Department, Mark showed some serious personality problems. He withdrew socially, found it difficult to carry on an ordinary conversation and gave one the impression he was depressed. He lacked self-confidence, was very constricted in personality and needed help in personality spontaneity.

Although Mark made satisfactory progress in kindergarten and first grade, his academic success grew weaker with each succeeding school year. In the sixth grade, Mark did not complete his work, and he showed little interest in school.

Physical Status

Mark is a tall, thin, white male. He is 14 years, 5 months of age, and in the seventh grade.

Early developmental history was considered normal. However, he did have whooping cough and at the age of two years had a very high fever from a virus.

When Mark's mother described some of his childhood problems, she mentioned the following: nervousness, sleeplessness, shyness, thumbsucking, strong fears, fighting and lying.

Neurological, speech and hearing tests given in 1970 were all within normal limits.

Home and Family Status

Mark is the oldest of eleven children, eight of whom now live at home with the mother. The mother has a seventh grade education and is unemployed. Mark's parents have been officially separated since June, 1969. Since that time Mark has had a Big Brother, and the family was involved in family counseling. Although the mother wanted to help Mark, she stated she "just didn't know how to handle children".

The mother remarked that Mark had behaved "fair at home", and that he is disciplined by taking away his play time. He reportedly got along "okay" with his mother, just fair with his brothers and sisters and "not good" with other children in the neighborhood and at school. Mark's mother would keep Mark in the house and away from other children as much as possible in order to avoid fights with the neighborhood children.

In 1970, the mother related that Mark would leave home, just disappearing, and would be gone for several days.

Previous Educational and Emotional Status

Mark's early school attendance was poor, and he was often tardy. He was quiet and cooperative but never volunteered in class. He daydreamed a lot. He was tested in the second grade by Psychological Services and found to be within the average range of intelligence but had rather extreme withdrawal symptoms.

In the fourth grade, Mark was reported by the classroom teacher as being tense, rigid and speaking only when necessary. He often had a frightened appearance and seemed on the verge of tears most of the time. His work was characterized by a very slow manner of speech and thinking. He was retested by Psychological Services and was found to be in the slow learner range of intelligence. He was working at the second grade level in reading and arithmetic; however, he exhibited average intellectual ability on the performance section of the Wechsler test. Statements made by Mark indicated his home environment was, to some extent, creating some of his problems.

During the fifth grade, Mark was expelled from school for disobedient behavior. He was later retained in the fifth grade. His teacher reported that he was a very slow student who did not respond to school work. He daydreamed, slept in class and never completed assignments. Mark was put on a year of probation with the Juvenile Court for having broken windows of the school with rocks. It was during this period that Mark was referred to Omaha-Douglas County Health Department.

Test results from Omaha-Douglas County Health Department indicated Mark had a very tight and constricted personality with indications there might be an early schizophrenic response. The Draw-A-Person Test indicated some schizophrenic elements. Doctors diagnosed Mark as undergoing a chronic, stressful situation characterized by withdrawal which was becoming profound.

Mark was hospitalized during May and June of 1970. During the hospital stay, Mark was difficult to evaluate. He verbalized little and remained withdrawn. With time in structured individualized psychotherapy, he began to respond in a limited way. He was placed on Ritalin medication. After a month of hospitalization, Mark was seen for therapy on a routine basis and remained on medication until May of 1971.

During the sixth grade, Mark's teacher reported that at times he would seem alright, and then again would fail to respond in any way. He continued to be disobedient and to have difficulties with his schoolwork.

Mark was referred to the Junior High Study Center for the seventh grade. He enrolled in December, 1971. He was withdrawn and never spoke until spoken to. Mark was an

isolate in the peer group having no friends. He started at the Center with the same attitude and behavior he had exhibited since the fourth grade. On the attitude scale, the staff gave Mark the following rating: average for age in cooperativeness; decidedly unstable in emotional behavior; decidedly unsocial in adjustment to peers; decidedly self-distrustful in self-confidence; and extremely uncooperative in industry. He scored a grade level of 4.8 in his reading pre-test at the Center. In math, he had no knowledge of division. When asked what nine divided into thirty-six meant, Mark's response was, "What's that?"

Procedure at Center to Promote Academic and Emotional Growth

The over-all procedure with Mark was acceptance, encouragement and a slow, gradual drawing of Mark into group situations. At first our objective was to get him to sit and listen in a group. Later our objective was to get Mark to contribute verbally to the group situation. Mark needed to develop a positive self-concept.

Since he had had so many failing experiences with his academic work, the teachers gave him work he was capable of doing, hence giving him successful experiences. In the beginning, class work was mainly on an individual basis with encouragement and positive verbal reinforcement from the staff. Counseling also was on an individual basis with a communication of caring from the counselor. Mark seemed in need of much adult attention and acceptance.

Gradually, without pressure, Mark was included in group discussions and group projects. At first Mark felt more comfortable sitting outside the group. He would listen to the other students then talk with the teacher on an individual basis about the group discussion. Eventually he moved into the group to listen. After several months, Mark began to contribute verbally to the group.

During conversation with the mother, it was discovered that Mark worked with Lego blocks at home, and that he was successful at making some complicated designs. Lego blocks were quickly added to the media of the Center. Mark was given an assignment to build a bridge from the blocks. He did so well that his peers recognized his ability.

A unit on interpersonal relationships was especially beneficial for Mark. Interchange of opinions and feelings among members of a small group gave the students an opportunity to realize that they all shared similar growing-up problems.

According to the mother, Mark's older sister, who does well in school, belittles Mark at home and mocks him in front of her friends. When the mother and sister realized how this was harmful to Mark's self-image, they were both cooperative in eliminating the ridicule.

Present Academic and Emotional Status at the Center

Mark has made considerable social and emotional growth since being at the Center. On a post-rating on the attitude scale, the staff gave Mark the following rating: average for age in cooperativeness; rather unstable in emotional behavior; average for age in adjustment to peers; rather self-distrustful in self-confidence; and rather uncooperative in industry. This is a growth of 6 points on the scale with improvement in every area except cooperativeness which remained the same and was average for his age.

Mark contributes willingly and independently in group discussion particularly in the social studies area. His contributions have been thoughtful and well received by his classmates. This has probably given him some self-confidence.

The mother reported that Mark is finally "standing up" for his rights with the neighborhood youths, and if he does not agree with them he will now express his criticism instead of walking away. According to her, it is "like a miracle" to hear Mark verbalize so freely. Although Mark still remains introverted and quiet, he has found some friendships both at home and at school.

Our efforts at the Center have been directed primarily toward emotional and social growth. We feel the academic strengths will grow more easily and naturally with emotional stability. As indicated, Mark has shown improvement in emotional and social attitudes. There has been some growth in his academic work, although this is more limited.

Mark is now working on division, a concept he had no understanding of when he arrived at the Center. His addition, subtraction and multiplication have also progressed. In reading, Mark has not improved his comprehension; he did master four objectives in a specially designed reading program. His largest academic growth was in the social studies area where he is now working up to his ability. Little reading was involved in this area; information was taught by way of class discussions, films, etc. English and spelling is difficult, probably because of his low reading level. In art Mark worked slowly, yet he was cooperative and he did produce some fine projects.

Mark will continue at the Study Center for the summer school session, and he will probably remain at the Center for the 1972-1973 school year.

IX. Evaluation

Objective I

Provide an environment which is designed to lead to wholesome personal and social adjustments.

* * * * * * * * * * *

The results of a student rating scale were used to appraise the junior high Individualized Study Center (ISC) students according to five personal and social developmental characteristics.

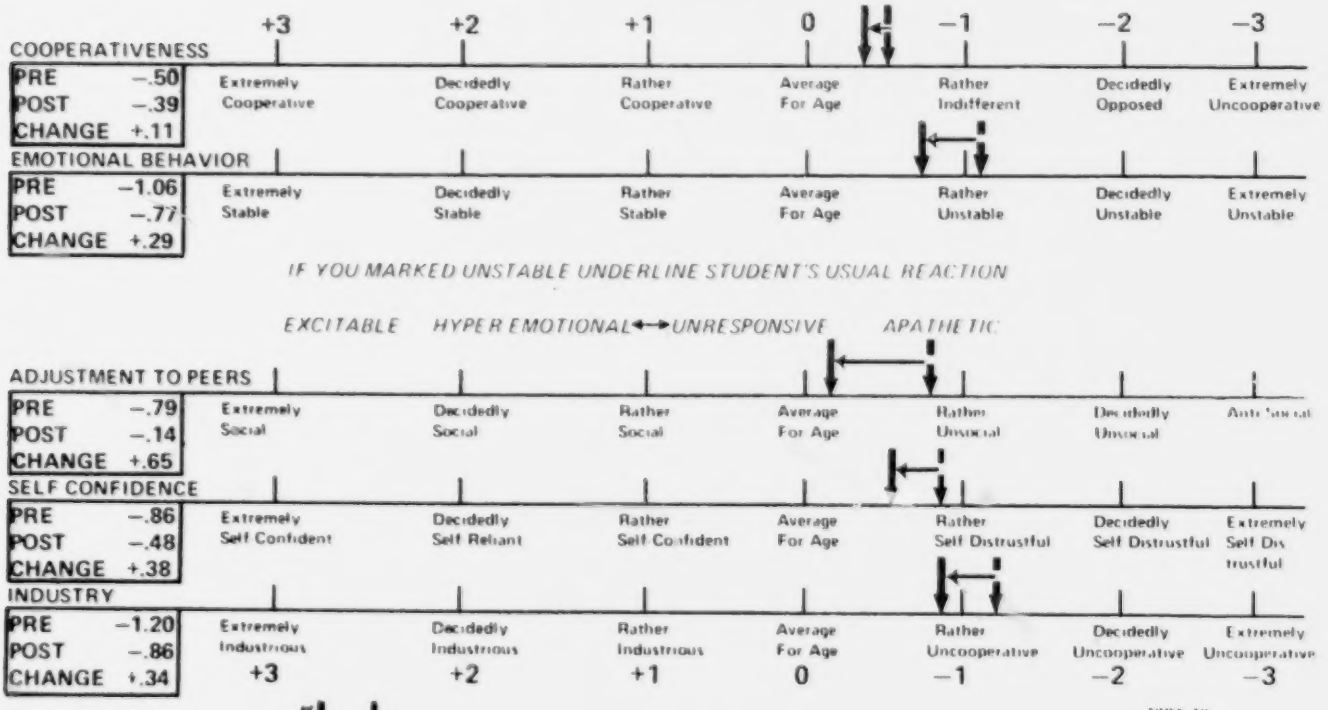
The areas rated were; cooperativeness, emotional behavior, adjustment to peers, self confidence and industry.

Students were rated during their first week (pre) at ISC and again at the end of the year (post) by a poll of all ISC professional staff members during a group meeting. Forty-four students who had entered ISC prior to February 1, 1972, were then selected for this sample.

In computing averages for the group, numerical values were assigned to all possible entries within each category. As demonstrated below, each category ranged from a +3 indicating the most positive rating to a -3 representing the most negative entry.

The broken arrow (⇩) indicates the point at which the group fell on the pre rating and the solid arrow shows the post rating for the same group. The corresponding numerical values are also recorded below each category.

STUDENT RATING SCALE – JR. HIGH INDIVIDUALIZED STUDY CENTER



The overall negative ratings shown on the scale are indicative of the general disposition of this population. However, on the basis of the teachers' judgement, the group gained in a positive direction on all five areas surveyed.

According to these evaluations, it can be seen that the area of greatest gain was "adjustment to peers", while the area of "industry" (motivation) seemed to be the one most in need of continued attention.

Objective 2

Provide an educational environment in which, under the guidance of understanding teachers, the student can participate in educational experiences and activities which produce the learning he needs, either for continued education in a present school operation or for the world of work.

* * * * * * * * * * *

The generally relaxed atmosphere, freedom of movement and amount of individual instruction helped provide an environment conducive to meeting the specific needs of ISC students.

Since the center opened in December, 1971, eighty-four students in grades seven, eight and nine have participated in a total of 420 academic or vocational courses. At the time of this report 125 of these have been completed. A projected 250 additional courses should be completed by the end of the summer session.

Specific curriculum offerings can be found under objective five of this evaluation.

Objective 3

Provide guidance and motivation for the student, through self-understanding to modify his behavior in socially acceptable ways.

* * * * * * * * * * *

The "Junior Index of Motivation (JIM) Scale" was used to assess the motivation toward school or Individualized Study Center students.

Designed by Jack R. Frymier of Ohio State University, the JIM Scale is a student questionnaire (Appendix B) developed from a study of thousands of students' responses to items concerning attitudes and values regarding school.

Frymier makes the following assumptions revealing the basic premises of the JIM Scale.

1. Motivation was assumed to be something which came from *within* rather than something which came from *without*.

2. Motivation has several aspects manifesting itself through an individual's personality structure, attitudinal structure and value structure.

3. Motivation toward school as used in the context of the JIM Scale includes such areas as attitude toward school, the extent to which education is valued, feelings for other people, value attributed to ideas, the concern for material things, personal determination and the attitude toward himself.

4. The subareas of personality, values and curiosity were singled out as aspects of human behavior most relevant for a study of academic motivation.

5. Students whose motivation toward school was essentially positive would have a more positive concept to self, have a more positive concept of others, be more able to tolerate uncertainty and the unknown, and be generally "healthier" in psychological ways.

6. Motivation is built upon values. These are typically assumed to be a part of personality. These are undoubtedly learned behavior and influenced by many factors within the individual's cultural context.

During the week of May 8, 1972, the JIM Scale was administered to seventy-three ISC students who had been enrolled at the center prior to February 1.

The center's mid-year start partially accounts for the subpar mean scores of ISC students in comparison to national means (table below). However, these results serve primarily as foundation data which will become more meaningful as subsequent measurements are taken.

TABLE 5
MEAN JUNIOR INDEX OF MOTIVATION SCALE SCORES
Junior High Individualized Study Center (May '72) and National Sample* (May '66) By Sex and Grade

	Grade 7		Grade 8		Grade 9	
	ISC Mean	National Mean	ISC Mean	National Mean	ISC Mean	National Mean
GIRLS	103.80	124.06	102.78	125.02	84.171	124.43
BOYS	91.85	115.44	92.16	117.74	86.00	120.21

Range – 0 - 200
N (ISC) – 73
N (National) – 1652

*A breakdown of the national sample distribution is included as part of the Appendix.

Another determinant related to school motivation is the attendance patterns of students.

A study of the attendance records of twenty-nine Individualized Study Center students identified as having attendance problems revealed they were in school 54.2% of the days they were on the membership rolls of their respective regular schools before being assigned to the Junior High ISC. This percentage would be lower if days of non-attendance as a result of not being accounted for on any school's records were considered. Twelve students included in this review didn't attend any school for either one semester, part of one semester or all year.

These same students were in attendance 72.9% of their cumulative membership days while at the Individualized Study Center.

It appears the attendance percentage growth from 54.2% to 72.9%, an improvement of 18.7%, indicates a positive student attitude toward the ISC educational program.

Objective 4

Provide a setting in which the student is encouraged to seek the assistance necessary for him to discover ways to compensate for inadequacies in his personal life.

* * * * * * * * * * *

As one measure of personal growth, the parents of ISC students were asked to express their views on the effectiveness of the ISC program with reference to alleviating their child's problem.

A written questionnaire (Appendix C) containing four closed and two open ended questions was sent to all parents during the week of May 22, 1972.

Of the twenty-nine questionnaires returned, seventeen parents felt the center had been *effective* in changing their child's problem, six said it had been *very effective* and six thought there had been *no change*.

The following information summarizes the responses returned on the twenty-nine parent questionnaires.

Question 1 – To what degree are you familiar with the operation of the Center?

	Response	Number
A.	Very Familiar	3
B.	Familiar	23
C.	Unfamiliar	2
D.	Very Unfamiliar	2

Question 2 – In what ways have you had contact with the Center? (More than one response was possible)

A.	Home Visit by staff member(s)	2
B.	Visited the Center for conference	12
C.	Toured the Center and met teachers	14
D.	Received semester progress report	12
E.	Telephone conversation	23
F.	No contact	1
G.	Other	2

Question 3 – How would you explain your student's main problem in dealing with a regular school situation? (More than one response was possible)

A.	Behavioral	13
B.	Truancy	7
C.	Emotional	11
D.	Fighting	4
E.	Health	5
F.	Poor Peer Relationship	4
G.	Drug Related	0
H.	Academic	3
I.	Other	0

Question 4 – To what degree do you feel the Center has been effective in changing this behavior in your child?

A.	Very Effective	6
B.	Effective	17
C.	No Change Observed	6
D.	Ineffective	0
E.	Very Ineffective	0

Question 5 – How has the *Individualized Study Center* helped your son or daughter? (The following quotes are representative samplings from the completed questionnaires)

"She goes to school now and enjoys it."

"He caught up with his class and his behavior is better."

"It has helped him to grow up and understand himself."

"The study center has helped my daughter to remain in school."

"Since my son started ISC, he hasn't been as nervous as he was in a regular school. He seems to get along better with other boys and girls, even at home."

"Has given her time to adjust and to grow up or mature emotionally."

"He doesn't seem to be as upset as he was in a regular school, and he can find help toward understanding his lessons."

"He enjoys school more now."

"My son has learned to read and to take more interest in reading."

"His whole personality has improved considerably. He now goes to school willingly and has only missed two days since beginning at ISC. We are most grateful this school is available for him."

"The ISC gave my daughter a chance to learn something. She is being watched more closely, and the other children do not seem to have a chance to influence her."

"It made it possible for her to finish her 8th grade and complete the 9th in half day sessions."

"His behavior has improved some, plus his fighting has been slowed down, which I consider a great improvement."

"In many respects it has enabled her to continue her education in spite of a poor self-concept."

"Since our son has been in ISC he has been talking with us about school and his work there. The relaxed attitude from his teachers seems to give him more incentive, although he still needs some discipline."

"She continues to have difficulty; however, her attendance is more regular than previously."

"He was constantly being sent home by the assistant principal for fighting or his behavior. Since he has been going to ISC, I haven't been called once about his behavior."

Question 6 – How can the *Individualized Study Center* improve its service to students?

"Perhaps provide a longer school day."

"Better selection of subjects such as foreign languages could be offered when possible."

Question 6 continued

"I'm sure the center is a help, although I feel students should get more hours. I know that times are changing, but it is not good to let a person have their way too much. I do feel the students may possibly roam too much."

"I think the school is very well managed and am so thankful it's available; however, I believe having a male teacher would give the boys a positive male image."

"Just keep up the work they are now doing."

"I think it is doing a fine job. But I wish the kids could stay in school more than half a day."

"A little more time per day seems necessary, or perhaps they could help us find part time jobs for them during the time they're not at school."

"Training, patience, understanding and adjusting with the child's level are the keys to improvement."

"I would suggest either a modular or engineered classroom approach for some of the students."

Objective 5

Provide the basic framework for establishing programs in basic education and introduce vocational skill development to broaden each student's educational and/or vocational horizons.

* * * * * * * * * * *

The list below contains the courses that were offered at the junior high ISC during the 1971-72 school year and the number of students in each grade who completed them.

	Course	Gr. 7	Gr. 8	Gr. 9
Basic	English	2	17	9
	Math	2	17	7
	Social Studies	2	15	8
	Science	1	8	0
	Art	1	8	0
	Reading	1	13	3
Vocational	Business Education			
	Health Occupations			
	Manufacturing			
	Building Construction			
	Visual Communications			
	Other			

Vocational courses were not included as part of the junior high ISC program; however, vocational offerings such as these were available at the senior high ISC's.

As a source of student feedback, several ISC students were asked to participate in an informal discussion concerning the negative and positive aspects of the ISC educational approach.

The following quotes represent excerpts from that session which was held during the week of May 15, 1972. The full length tape is available for review.

Positive Comments

"At the Individualized Study Center we have the freedom to move around. The relaxed atmosphere makes it easier for us to study."

"You feel more comfortable here because you're not pressured. You can work at your own speed without having to compete with everyone."

"The general attitude of the teachers here enables you to get to know them better, and you feel that you can go to them with problems."

"Teachers have time to talk to you because there are fewer kids to work with."

"The openness of the center is much less confining than a regular school. At ISC you don't have to face the same old drab classroom walls everyday."

"I think you can learn more at the center because at a regular school the teacher wouldn't stop when we missed a point or didn't understand something."

"Teachers are younger and that helps because they understand your problems and they sort of know what's going on."

"At ISC you get a chance to start over. They treat you like anybody else and forget about your past record."

Negative Comments

"I think we're getting too crowded. Sometimes at the center I have to relinquish my time to somebody else."

"We should have a man whom you could sort of 'lean on' when a boy has a problem. We need a masculine image to look up to."

"In some areas I think we need more equipment. In art and science for example we need instruments and lab equipment to work with."

"It would be nice to have some kind of physical education or activity during the day. There's a park across the street, and we could use it."

"Even though cost is a factor, we should have course offerings in areas like shop and home economics."

Objective 6

Provide opportunities for the student to develop the motivation, desire and attitudes which will make it possible for him to return to his home school at the earliest practical time.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Since it did not open until midyear, the Individualized Study Center had not realized its overall goal of returning students to the regular classroom as of the end of the second semester.

However, at the time of this writing the center anticipated returning approximately twenty students to a regular school by the end of the 1972 summer session. In addition, thirteen more were under consideration for return if their summer school work proved satisfactory.

Recommendations for fall placement are shown below.

	STAY AT JR. HIGH ISC ADVANCE ONE GRADE	RETURN TO REGULAR SCHOOL	STAY AT JR. HIGH ISC SAME GRADE	TRANSFER TO OTHER ISC
7th	18	0	2	0
8th	19	14	1	2
9th	15	6	0	1
TOTAL	52	20	3	3

APPENDIX

Omaha World Herald

Center Gives 2nd Chance To Students

7-30-72

By Larry Parrott

Until five years ago, Omaha boys and girls who couldn't get along with their high school teachers had three options.

They could drop the course and perhaps not graduate.

They could try to transfer to another school, which wasn't easy. Or they could quit school.

For a girl who became pregnant, the choice was simpler. She quit school.

The kid who made a habit of skipping class got expelled.

The youth who fell behind because of a long illness probably flunked.

Things began changing in 1967 when the Omaha Public School System opened its first individualized study center in the basement of an old school building at 3819 Jones Street.

One of the fastest-growing divisions of the school system resulted.

Omaha taxpayers, with some help from the federal treasury, will spend more than $1 million next term to preserve the education of as many as 950 wavering students.

A report on the growth of the program has been given to the Omaha Board of Education by Carl Palmquist, former Tech High principal who, last year, was named director of the project.

From its basement beginning, the program has spread to four centers which teach either academic subjects or job skills.

Another will open soon on the Near North Side. Roger Bridenbaugh, assistant director, said it will offer both types of schooling.

Four teachers taught 61 boys in the 1967-68 term.

Last year, a staff of 38 worked with 427 boys and 372 girls.

Half of the girls were pregnant or young mothers.

Nine teachers and an administrator will be added to the staff when the new site opens. Officials don't know in advance how many boys and girls will be sent there but they think the 1972-73 total at all centers will increase about 150.

Half of those who completed requirements for

● Continued from Page 1

a high school diploma were graduated with the class at their home schools.

Students with emotional and educational handicaps attend the centers. So do truants, students who won't behave in a traditional classroom, some who entered the school system late in the term and others who need individualized instruction.

Some 50 per cent of the students are older than their home school classmates.

Students who were asked to identify the centers' strong points last term listed in order:

Freedom of movement, one-to-one teacher relationship, interesting courses, few rules, more counseling and the small student body.

Twenty per cent of those assigned to a center last term were later returned to their home school.

The centers are fighting their image, however. Officials acknowledge that the public looks on them as schools for delinquents and dropouts.

But they say this isn't true of the majority of students.

Palmquist wants to add job training courses to the currently all-academic curriculum at the Twenty-fourth and Martha Streets center and the one for junior high students at 3902 Farnam Street.

Another goal this year is to develop a job placement program for center graduates.

Last May, parents of 80 enrollees were asked to rate the centers. Thirty responded. Of these, 22 said the program had helped their children.

Omaha World Herald

Study Centers Offer Chance For Dropouts

By Larry Parrott

At first glance, Nancy O. looked like a winner.

She was smart, 16, pretty and shy.

Too shy, perhaps. That's how her teachers saw it when she started missing classes at an Omaha high school. One year, she missed 45 days.

She's changed.

If she keeps up her present pace, she'll graduate this spring, with above-average grades and a year of near perfect attendance.

Then there was Johnny B., a two-fisted athletic type, the hero of the junior class.

He had fair grades, a good left hand and a quick temper. He liked to fight. He often did. And he got expelled.

But he's back in school, wiser and warier. He hasn't thrown a punch this fall.

700

The names are borrowed. But Nancy O. and Johnny B. are real case histories behind one of the fastest growing and costliest operations, from a per student standpoint, in the Omaha Public Schools.

They are among the 700 teen-aged Omahans who will be schooled this year at an individualized study center because they can't fit into a conventional classroom.

They include one out of 35 students enrolled in a junior or senior high. All are average or above in intelligence. Some have exceptionally high I.Q.'s.

All have been classified as problem students.

The first center opened in 1968 at Twenty-fourth and Martha Streets to teach academic subjects. An occupational skills center — teaching vocational trades — was started at 5703 Military Avenue. Another academic center is operating at 6031 Binney Street.

Another academic center will open in a few days and a skills center will be established later this term on the Near North Side. Officials also want a skills center in South Omaha.

The newest addition will be at 3025 Farnam Street, in a building formerly used as a dance studio and loan company office.

It will be the first center for dropout-prone students in junior high (grades seven through nine), and the first to be federally financed.

The Omaha district will get $132,000 in federal Title I funds to educate 100 students for one year. That's $1,320 a student, about double the per-pupil cost in the high schools.

Counseling

Counseling and individual instruction run up the cost.

"We're counseling oriented. Counseling is the

Please turn to Page 9, Col. 1

●Continued from Page 1.

key word in this program," said Carl Palmquist, former Tech High principal who now directs all individualized study centers.

The Board of Education budgeted $756,000 to pay the rent this year on five buildings, the salaries of teachers and other personnel and the cost of supplies and equipment, according to Charles W. Beattie, the board's secretary.

All teachers also act as counselors. Palmquist and Asst. Director Roger Bridenbaugh spend much of their time counseling.

A student encounters unorthodox methods in an individualized center. His first reaction is likely to be "What kind of school is this?"

There are neither classrooms nor classes. Students and teachers work in big, open rooms, seated at tables or framed by machinery.

Books Everywhere

In the reading room of the new junior high center, books are everywhere, heaped in stacks and tossed haphazardly on tables.

The disorder is deliberate. Reading specialists have found that a casual learning approach works better with the average youth who dislikes school.

Students generally spend about three hours a day at a center. Some study at home. Some work. They can progress at their own pace but they must complete the standard requirements for a high school diploma.

The teacher ratio is about 17 to 1, well below the high school average. Some conventional classes run as high as 35 or more students to one teacher.

At an individualized center, students and teachers confer on a one-to-one basis in each subject, Bridenbaugh said.

About half the students assigned to the centers are girls. Some are pregnant. A few boys and girls have been on drugs. But Palmquist said drugs are not a major contributor to the enrollment.

Schools have always had a high dropout potential, he said. Only recently have they been doing something to reduce it.

Getting Results

The centers are getting results, he said. Of 141 students enrolled at the Martha Street center the first quarter of this year, 20 quit.

Thirteen of 169 dropped out at the Binney Street site. Six of 51 left the center at Military Avenue.

Without the program, every student enrolled might have quit school, Palmquist said.

Students who couldn't adjust to a classroom "just left school or were pushed out" before the centers were established, he said.

Daily attendance at the centers averaged between 75 and 80 per cent last year, against an average of 91.4 per cent in all senior high schools.

But some students missed up to 70 days last year before they were transferred to the centers.

More Relaxed

A teacher in a center may have individual conferences with as many as 80 students in one day. In a conventional high school program, a teacher may work with 250 a day in classes.

"We haven't had a discipline problem this year," said Palmquist. "And these kids," he added, "have been serious discipline problems in the past."

Bridenbaugh credits the difference to the educational atmosphere at the centers.

"Students are more relaxed here. They're not pressured to confrom to a group," he said.

Some 700 former students at the centers were asked to evaulate them recently.

They said they were most impressed by the freedom of movement and the amount of time teachers spent with each student.

-30-

Directions to Teachers
(Please read carefully)

The enclosed JIM Scale STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE is an instrument for assessing students' motivation toward school. It has been carefully developed from a study of thousands of students' responses to these particular items. There are 80 items, but only 50 are scored (see key enclosed).

Although the questionnaire is not timed, it will probably take about 30 minutes for all students to complete the items. DO NOT explain the basic purpose of the test to students; that is, do not make any mention of the fact that this test is designed to ascertain their motivation toward school. Explain rather that it is an instrument for studying students' attitudes and values.

In administering the STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE to your classes, give each student a booklet, then ask each one to fill out the information called for on the front page.

Read the directions on the front of the STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE aloud, then permit each student to answer every question, but do not offer assistance of any kind.

Students should mark their answers in the blocks beside each item, and they should indicate both a number and a plus or minus sign inside. Perhaps an illustration on the blackboard would make that idea clear. Such a procedure is not necessary, but it will both simplify and facilitate scoring.

Comparison of JIM Scale Norming Sample
With Total U.S. Population Distribution*
(Sample N=3179)

Region	Total		Central Cities		Suburban		Outside	
	Actual %	Sample %	Actual Pop. %	Sample %	Actual Pop. %	Sample %	Actual Pop. %	Sample %
North East	5.86	5.11	1.81	.00	2.31	.00	1.74	5.11
Mid. Atlan.	19.05	16.06	7.85	5.39	7.74	5.29	3.46	5.38
E.N. Central	20.20	21.93	7.06	6.87	6.48	5.86	6.66	9.20
W.N. Central	8.58	21.66	2.15	9.49	1.57	1.64	4.86	10.53
S. Atlantic	14.48	10.94	3.47	3.12	3.80	2.65	7.21	5.17
E.S. Central	6.72	7.21	1.34	.00	1.08	1.51	4.30	5.70
W.S. Central	9.45	6.53	3.59	2.84	1.46	.00	4.40	3.69
Mountain	3.83	2.49	1.14	.00	.73	.00	1.96	2.49
Pacific	11.83	8.07	3.94	.00	5.42	2.05	2.47	6.02
Total	100.00	100.00	32.35	27.71	30.59	19.00	37.06	53.29

*Source: Figures computed from data reported in Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1961, p. 21.

Omaha Public Schools

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES
3819 JONES STREET
OMAHA, NEBRASKA 68105

May 23, 1972

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Since a member of your family was enrolled in the Individualized Study Center during the past year, we are asking your help in deciding the value of this method of helping students.

To do this we would appreciate your answers to the following questions. All answers will be held in strict confidence.

1. To what degree are you familiar with the operation of the Center? (Please circle one)

   A. Very familiar
   B. Familiar
   C. Unfamiliar
   D. Very unfamiliar

2. In what ways have you had contact with the Center? (Please circle those that apply)

   A. Home visit by staff member(s)
   B. Visited the Center for conference
   C. Toured the Center and met teachers
   D. Received semester progress report
   E. Telephone conversation
   F. No contact
   G. Other (Please explain)

3. How would you explain your student's main problem in dealing with a regular school situation? (Please circle one)

   A. Behavioral B. Truancy C. Emotional D. Fighting E. Health
   F. Poor peer relationship G. Drug related H. Academic
   I. Other (Please explain)

4. To what degree do you feel the Center has been effective in changing this behavior in your child? (Please circle one)

   A. Very effective
   B. Effective
   C. No change observed
   D. Ineffective
   E. Very ineffective

5. How has the Individualized Study Center helped your son or daughter? (Use back of sheet if necessary)

6. How can the Individualized Study Center improve its service to students? (Use back of sheet)

Please return this page in the enclosed self-addressed envelope by Friday, June 2. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Carl Palmquist, Director
Individualized Study Centers

Junior High Individualized Study Center

Achievement Award

PRESENTED TO

_____

FOR

_____

DATE _____

_____

_____

9220 72